

Defense Travel System

DTS Guide to Processing Authorizations for the New Fiscal Year

Revision History

Revision	Date	Authorization	Change Description	Page, Section
6.0	9/5/07	Michael Woolf	Rewrote this section.	Section 4.1
7.0	7/24/08	DTMO	General update for FY09 in various sections and graphic. Updated document number to version 7.0 throughout.	ALL
8.0	9/6/08	DTMO	Update to show new functionality in the accounting module and how to allocate expenses.	Chapters 3 & 4
9.0	7/15/09	DTMO	General updates to manual.	ALL
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CHAPTER 1: Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview on processing Defense Travel System (DTS) authorizations affected by the new fiscal year for user/travelers, AOs, Finance Defense Travel Administrators (FDTAs), and Budget DTAs (BDTAs). This includes the process for preparing travel authorizations in the current fiscal year for travel that starts in a new fiscal year, or for trips that begin in the current fiscal year and continue into a new fiscal year.

Note: Guidance for Lines of Accounting (LOAs) rollover and copy functions, as well as setting up budgets for the new fiscal year can be found in the *DTS Guide to Establishing LOAs and Budgets for the New Fiscal Year*

CHAPTER 2: Overview

Preparing DTS documents for travel that occurs in a new fiscal year or crosses fiscal years require specific processes as described in this guide. The fiscal year for the Department of Defense (DoD) begins on 1 October and ends on 30 September of the following calendar year. Travel that begins on or after 1 October and requires authorization and reservations prior to 1 October is considered to be travel that occurs in a new fiscal year. Travel that begins 30 September or before, and ends 1 October or after of the same calendar year is considered to cross fiscal years.

Note: Organizations using No-Year or Multi-Year funds should refer to Chapter 8 of this document.

2.1 Reference Materials

The following documents provide additional supporting information on the fiscal year process:

- Defense Travel Administrator's (DTA) Manual
- DTS Guide to Establishing LOAs and Budgets for the New Fiscal Year

These documents can be found at http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/training.cfm.

2.2 Shutdown Periods

Many accounting systems that interface with DTS shut down for a period of time starting in September. A list of the shutdown periods is published and announced via a Customer Service Notification (CSN). DTS shutdowns are never planned to occur during the fiscal year cross over period.

Documents approved during the shutdown will be held by DTS. Document processing should be done before the shutdown to accomplish any needed transactions for the traveler.

CHAPTER 3: Travel That Occurs in a New Fiscal Year

This chapter provides guidance to the traveler, AO, and FDTA/BDTA for creating DTS authorizations in the current fiscal year for travel that starts in a new fiscal year.

Example: The traveler creates the travel authorization on 15 September (current fiscal year) for travel that starts 1 October or after (new fiscal year).

Travel arrangements can be made for the entire trip; however, General Services Administration (GSA) City Pair flights will only be available for the new FY after the airlines enter the GSA contract award information into their Global Distribution System (GDS) and the DTS database is updated. These actions typically occur in September, and a Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) CSN will be issued when the information is available in DTS. Travelers making flight arrangements prior to the awarding and loading of the new contracts will not be able to access GSA City Pair fares. This occurs in non-DTS situations as well, and local business rules used in past years should be reviewed for applicability. See Chapter 5 for further information.

Generally, authorizations created in DTS for travel that begins in a future fiscal year should not be stamped APPROVED by the AO until the FDTA/BDTA establishes both the new fiscal year LOA(s) and funding for the budget(s) in DTS.

Note: Funding for a new fiscal year is made available by a funding authority external to DTS.

Note: All organizations have the ability to approve new fiscal year travel documents in the current fiscal year. DTS will hold the new fiscal year obligation transactions until the accounting systems are ready to receive the transactions. This facilitates applying the Tickets Are Waiting (TAW) date for the Commercial Travel Office (CTO).

For travel that requires ticketing before the AO can approve the document in DTS, and new fiscal year funding has not been approved, the traveler should follow local business rules for approving transportation with verbal approval. The verbal approval allows the CTO to ticket the transportation already booked in the DTS Reservations module, which then updates DTS with the ticketed information. The Transportation Officer (TO) typically provides verbal approval; however, this may vary by site. The AO is still required to digitally approve the document after new fiscal year funding is made available.

3.1 Steps for Creating an Authorization for Travel in New Fiscal Year

This section explains how to manage a travel authorization created in the current fiscal year for travel that starts in a new fiscal year.

- 1. Create the travel authorization in DTS (i.e., enter itinerary, make travel reservations, and enter the associated expenses for the trip).
- 2. Prior to signing the document, the following must occur:
 - From the Accounting screen (Figure 3-1), select an LOA for the new fiscal year. If the current
 fiscal year LOA exists by default, remove the current fiscal year LOA. If a new fiscal year LOA
 is not available (i.e., the FDTA has not loaded the new fiscal year LOAs into DTS), leave the

LOA selection blank. Leaving the LOA selection blank, in this instance, is acceptable. This triggers an advisory that an LOA has not been selected by displaying: "No ACCT CODE Assigned" (Figure 3-2).

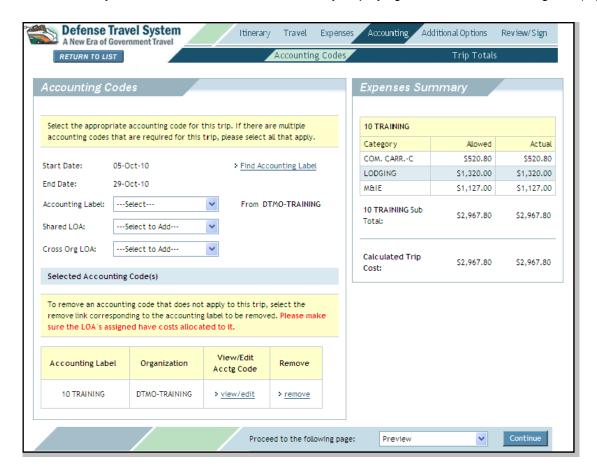


Figure 3-1: Accounting Screen

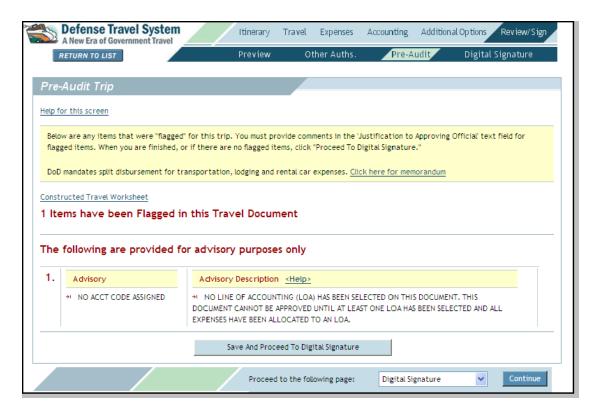


Figure 3-2: Advisory- No ACCT CODE Assigned

The user/traveler needs to provide comments to the AO before signing the document. The
traveler will need to go to the **Preview Trip** Screen (Figure 3-3). The traveler should enter
comments that are similar to the following text:

"Travel is for next fiscal year. Do not approve until funding becomes available."

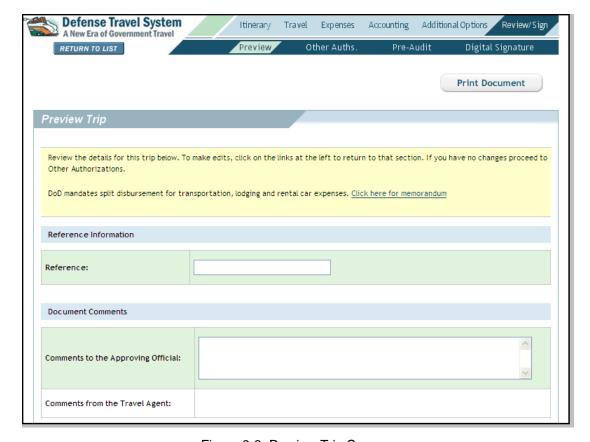


Figure 3-3: Preview Trip Screen

- 3. Proceed to the **Digital Signature** screen to sign the document. After the document is signed, the CTO confirms the travel reservation(s) and the normal routing process continues.
- 4. The AO must hold the document for approval until notified by the FDTA/BDTA that new fiscal year funding is available and loaded in DTS. See Section 3.2 for steps when funding becomes available.

3.2 Steps for Approving an Authorization When New Fiscal Year Funding is Available

When the new funding becomes available, the FDTA/BDTA must establish the new fiscal year LOA(s) and budget item(s) in the DTS Budget module. This process is explained in the DTS Guide to Establishing LOA(s) and Budget(s) for the New Fiscal Year.

After the FDTA/BDTA completes this process, the AO can approve the authorization in DTS even if the accounting system is not yet ready to process transactions. Since DTS will hold the new fiscal year obligation transactions until the accounting systems are ready, the AO has the ability to approve new fiscal year travel documents in the current fiscal year.

Once the authorization has electronically routed to the AO, the authorization can be approved in DTS as follows:

- 1. If the new fiscal year LOA(s) is not appearing on the document, update the accounting data.
 - From the **Accounting** screen (Figure 3-1), select the LOA(s) for the new fiscal year. If more than one new fiscal year LOAs are required, allocate the expenses accordingly.
 - Do not use prior year funds to fund travel in the new fiscal year.
- 2. Continue the routing and approval process.
- 3. At APPROVED, the Tickets Are Waiting (TAW) date is applied to the passenger name record (PNR) and the CTO tickets the trip three business days prior to departure.
- 4. If the LOAs, funding, and approval cannot be accomplished prior to departure, see Section 3.3.

3.3 Trips Departing in a New Fiscal Year: Before Funding and Approval are Available

In certain situations, a traveler may need to depart prior to the authorization being approved. This may occur because the formal LOA rollover and Budget module updates cannot be made in time.

The DTA should establish procedures in advance with both the TO and CTO to facilitate this situation. The procedures used prior to implementation of DTS should be adaptable to this situation. See Chapter 5 for further clarification.

Depending on the organization's local business rules and the CTO contract, verbal approval can be given to travel, and the CTO tickets the trip based on instructions from the TO or other designated official. A DTS document is then created (Section 3.1 above) and then approved as explained in Section 3.2.

3.4 "No Budget Exists" / "Insufficient Funds"

AOs cannot approve travel authorizations when the funding message indicates that "No Budget Exists." AOs will receive this message if during FY rollover the FDTA/BDTA did not create new budgets.

AOs will receive an "Insufficient Funds" warning message if attempting to APPROVE a document that has a budget but may not have had the initial amounts put in, and there is no available balance. The FDTA/BDTA must be contacted to update the affected budget.

CHAPTER 4: Fiscal Year Crossover Travel

This chapter provides guidance to the user/traveler and AO on creating and approving DTS authorizations for travel crossing fiscal years when using Single-Year funds.

Example: A user/traveler may need to create an authorization in the current fiscal year for travel that begins on 18 September (in current fiscal year), and ends on 6 October (new fiscal year).

Note: The traveler creates the authorization for the entire portion of the travel that crosses fiscal years. This step requires the traveler to include both the current fiscal year LOA and the new fiscal year LOA. However, the new fiscal year LOA cannot be added until after the FDTA/BDTA has established the new fiscal year LOA(s) and budget(s) in DTS.

Note: This does not apply to travel funded by Multi-Year, or No-Year appropriations, when the LOA in the authorization can be used in both the old and new years. See the *DTA Manual*, Chapter 8.

4.1 Steps for Creating an Authorization for the Entire Travel That Crosses Fiscal Years

1. Create the travel authorization in DTS. In the itinerary section, the travel dates should be entered for the entire portion of the TDY. For example, the traveler indicates on the itinerary that the travel starts 18 September and ends 6 October (Figure 4-1).

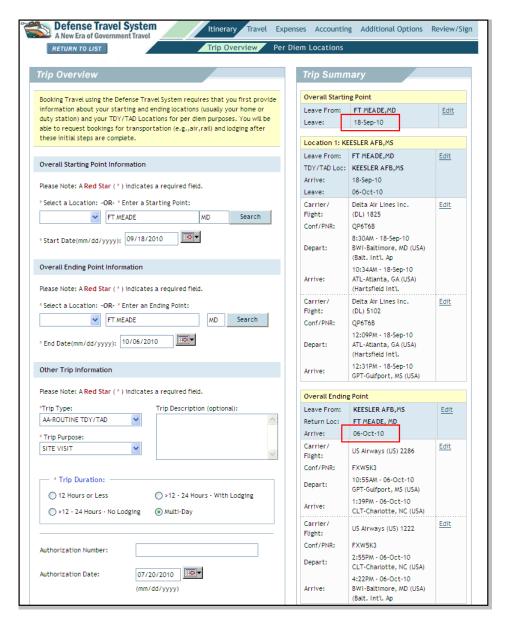


Figure 4-1: Trip Summary

In the DTS Travel module, the user/traveler should select departure and return flights using the
actual pre-populated trip itinerary dates. Hotel and rental car reservations can also be selected for
the entire trip.

Note: GSA City Pair availability in the new FY is dependent upon contract award and loading into the Reservation System. These fares may not show up for the new FY travel until September. If City Pair

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flights are not posted to the GDS used by the CTO, the traveler should not select a return flight. If possible, wait until GSA contract fares are available. Travelers can create an amendment and add a future return flight using the DTS Travel module. The traveler cannot use the Travel module to add a return flight after the departure date; they must go offline to the CTO and then manually enter the flight information in the amendment (Section 4.2) or voucher. If the return date is in early October, the traveler may select a coach class ticket due to the non-availability of GSA fares, which is supported in DTS under the air availability display. See Chapter 5 for further information.

3. If the traveler has made transportation reservations outside DTS, the cost will be entered into the **Other Transportation** screen (Figure 4-2).

Note: DTS will automatically allocate all ticketed transportation expenses to the LOA(s) for the fiscal year in which the expense is ticketed. (e.g. If the trip begins in the current FY and ends in the new FY, the airfare for both the departure and return flight that was ticketed in the current FY will be allocated to the current FY LOA).

Note: Once the air reservations have been selected, the traveler will **NOT** need to adjust the itinerary dates for the new FY crossover procedures.

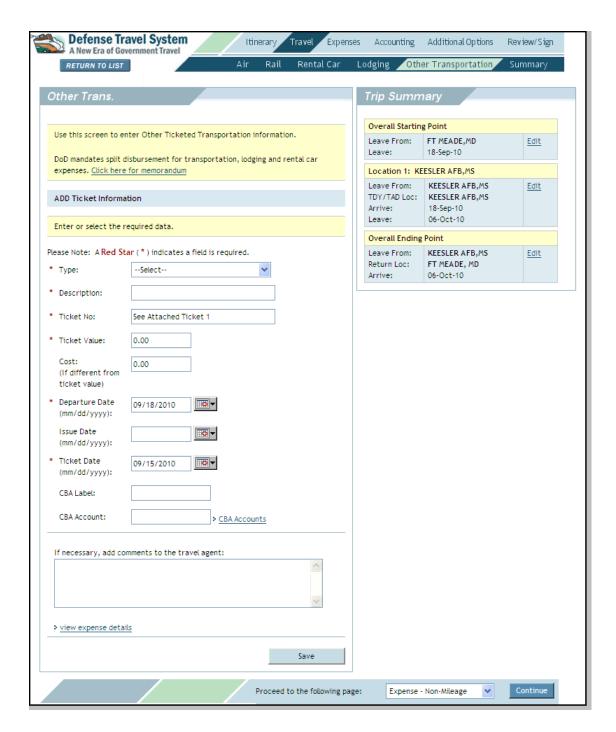


Figure 4-2: Other Trans. Screen

4. The traveler adds any applicable expenses for the entire portion of the trip with the appropriate dates or date ranges.

- Proceed to the Expenses > Per Diem Entitlements screen to verify that lodging is accurate for all dates. If necessary, add any other special duty conditions, actual expenses, meals provided, leave, etc.
- 6. The traveler adds the current fiscal year LOA (if it was not already populated by default) and also adds the next fiscal year LOA to fund the current and new fiscal year portion of the travel (Figure 4-3).

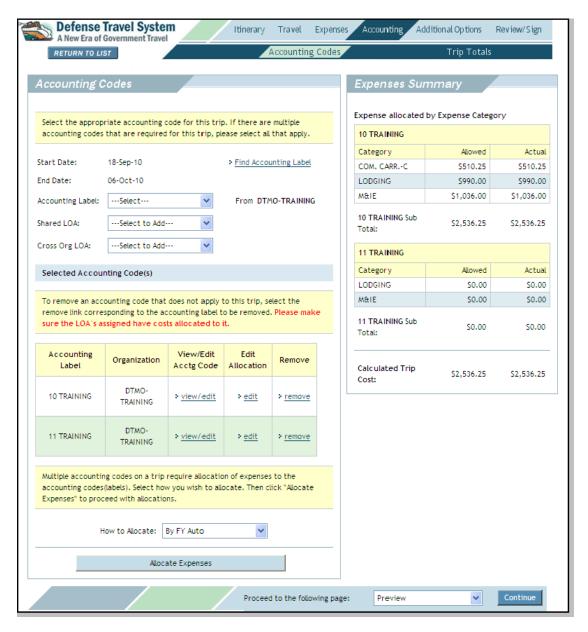


Figure 4-3: Accounting Codes Screen

7. With the addition of the new fiscal year LOA, the traveler is prompted to either accept the FY auto allocation method or cancel (Figure 4-4). If using a single LOA for each fiscal year, select **OK** to allow DTS to automatically allocate the expenses based on the date or date ranges between the two LOAs. If more than two LOAs are required for the document, select **Cancel** and the expenses will need to be allocated by Category/Date or by the other methods of allocation.



Figure 4-4: Auto Fiscal Year Pop-up

- 8. Before signing, the traveler should add a comment to the AO: "Traveler is expected to return on DD MM YYYY, so travel crosses fiscal years. This authorization includes the current and the new fiscal year itinerary and expenses."
- 9. After the traveler applies their digital signature, the document routes to the CTO for booking of transportation and lodging/rental arrangements.
- 10. The authorization then routes to the AO for approval.
- 11. Upon AO approval, DTS routes the PNR to the CTO and sends the current year obligation transactions to the accounting system. The new fiscal year obligation transactions will be held by DTS until the accounting system is ready to receive them.

4.2 Steps for Creating an Amendment for the Portion of Travel That Occurs in a New Fiscal Year

When the new fiscal year funding becomes available, the FDTA/BDTA must load the appropriate budget item(s) in the DTS Budget module. This process is explained in the DTS Guide to Establishing LOA(s) and Budget(s) for the New Fiscal Year.

After the FDTA/BDTA completes this process, AOs and travelers within the organization must be informed. In fiscal year crossover travel situations where only the current fiscal year portion of the authorization was created and approved (with only the current fiscal year LOA), the traveler will need to amend the original authorization, update the itinerary to include the portion of the travel that takes place in the new fiscal year and apply the additional LOA(s) for the new fiscal year.

Note: Trips that include SPPs should be rescheduled on the amendment and processed normally once the amendment is approved. If the 30-day window falls during the shutdown/fund availability period (generally late September to the middle of October) the delayed payment is processed to disbursing as soon as the amendment receives a Positive Acknowledgement (POSACK) stamp from the accounting system.

4.2.1 Steps for Amending the Authorization in a New Fiscal Year

1. Create the Amendment for the Authorization. Add comments to identify the purpose of the amendment (Figure 4-5).

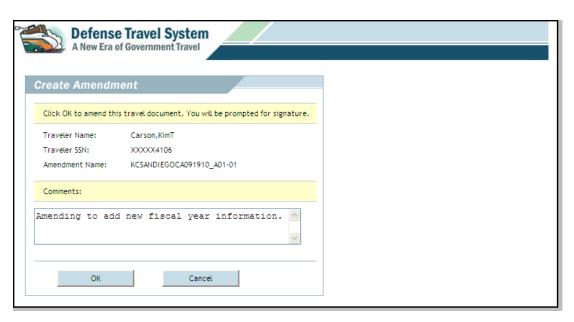


Figure 4-5: Create Amendment Screen

 As part of the amendment process, the user/traveler must change the return date in the itinerary of the authorization to reflect the date in the new fiscal year. Change the end date on the **Trip Overview** screen (Figure 4-6). Scroll to the bottom of the screen and select **Proceed to Per Diem Locations**.

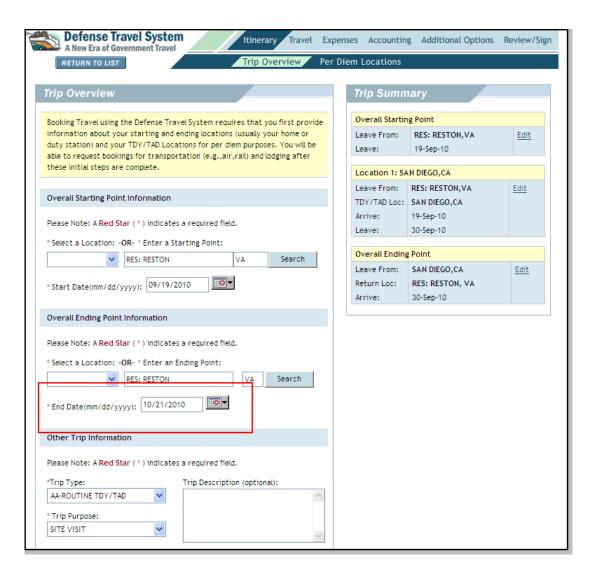


Figure 4-6: Trip Overview/Trip Summary Screen

3. After the overall trip dates are updated, the traveler will need to update any per diem locations on the document. Select **Edit** (Figure 4-7) on the location that needs to have the end date updated. Verify that the itinerary reflects the complete trip crossing the fiscal year.

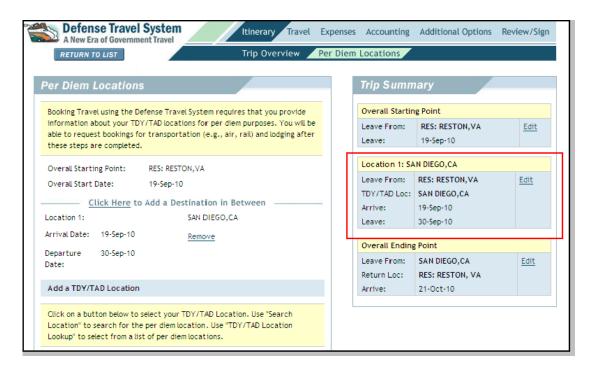


Figure 4-7: Per Diem Locations - Edit

4. On the **Trip Overview** screen, verify that the itinerary reflects the complete trip crossing the fiscal year (Figure 4-8).

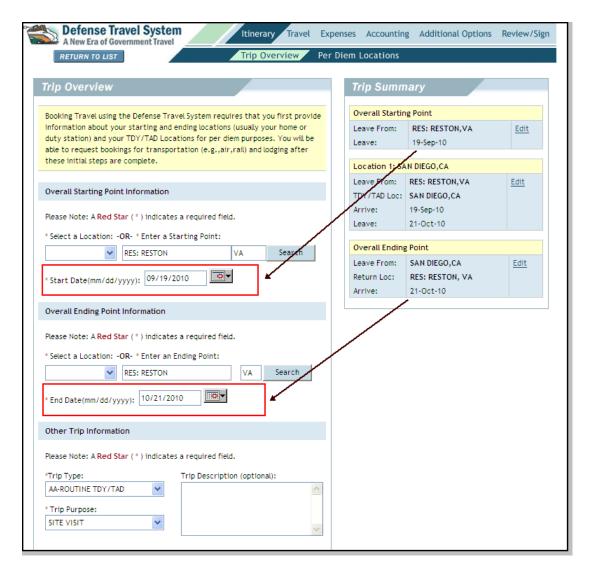


Figure 4-8: Trip Overview/Trip Summary Screen

5. If the traveler made transportation reservations outside DTS, the costs will need to be entered on the **Expenses > Other Transportation** screen (Figure 4-2).

6. The traveler will update the list of expenses applicable to the new fiscal year (Figure 4-9).

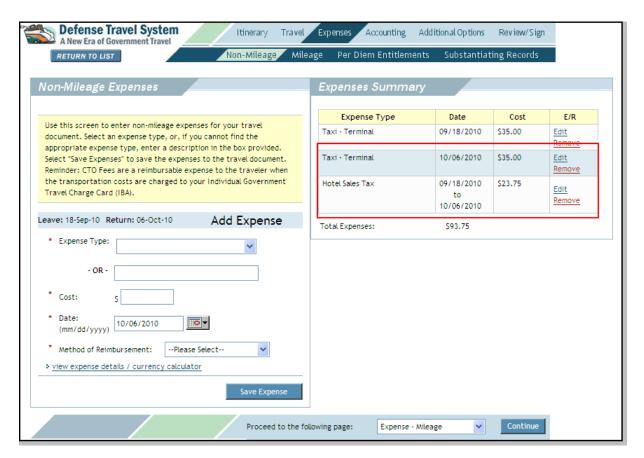


Figure 4-9: Non-Mileage Expenses/Expenses Summary Screen

- 7. Proceed to the Expenses > Per Diem Entitlements screen to verify lodging is updated for all dates. Also, if any other special duty conditions were previously selected (i.e., actual expenses, meals provided, leave, etc.); these must be reentered because they were removed as a result of Step 3.
- 8. The traveler will add LOA(s) to fund the new fiscal year portion of the travel. With the addition of the new fiscal year LOA, the traveler is prompted to either accept the FY Auto allocation method or decline. If using a single LOA for each fiscal year, select **OK** to allow DTS to automatically allocate the expenses based on the date or date ranges between the two LOAs (Figure 4-10). If more than two LOAs are required on a document, the expenses

will need to be allocated By Category/Date or by any of the other four methods of allocation.

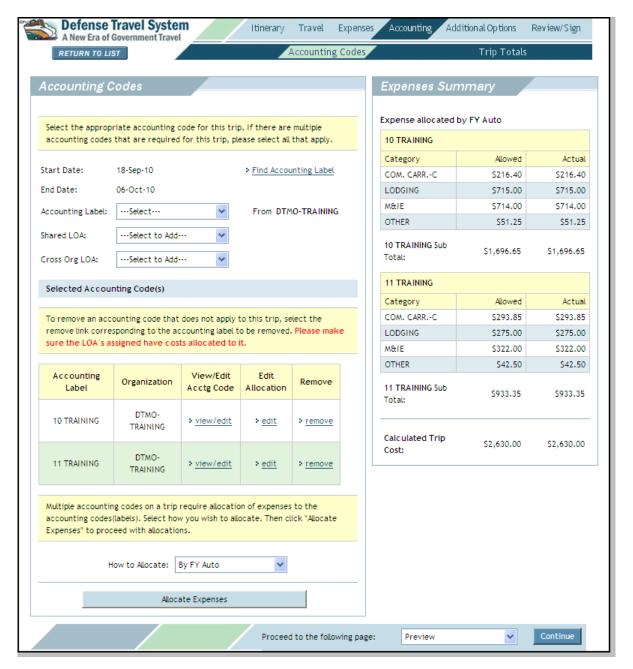


Figure 4-10: Allocate Expenses by FY Auto Summary Screen

 Proceed to the **Digital Signature** screen to sign the document when the above steps have been completed. After the document is signed, the normal routing process continues.

4.3 Prior Year Trips Created/Approved in the New Fiscal Year

Documents may be funded with prior FY funds. All documents that cite prior year LOAs and have the appropriate FY in the LOA label will fund to the associated prior year budget in the FY Budget module.

CHAPTER 5: Air Reservations and the New GSA City Pair Contract Award

Travel arrangements can be made for the entire trip. However, GSA City Pair flights will only be available for the new FY after the airlines enter the GSA contract award information into their GDS and the DTS database is updated. This typically occurs in September, and a DTS Customer Service Notification is issued when the information is available in DTS. Travelers making flight arrangements prior to the awarding and loading of the contract will not be able to access GSA City Pair fares. This occurs in non-DTS situations, and local business rules used in past years should be reviewed for applicability.

Example: Departure date is 1 October or later and the new FY authorization is APPROVED in September.

The following suggestions and considerations apply to DTS users:

- If the new FY fares are not yet available, and the traveler can wait to make reservations because travel is after mid-October, the travel request should be made just prior to the current FY approval. Once funds are available and loaded, the accounting systems start processing transactions.
- If the new FY fares are not yet available and the traveler needs reservations for travel in early October, these could be made using the non-restricted fares reflected in DTS. The TO should consider enlisting the CTO to monitor these trips and attempt to book on a suitable GSA fare when available.

Crossover Trip Example: Departure date is prior to 1 October and the return date is 1 October or later. The authorization is completed through the actual trip end date. Booking flights for travel before 1 October is accomplished normally, as current GSA City Pairs are available and entered in the document.

If the new FY fares are not yet available, and the traveler can wait for reservations, the return flight could be completed offline with the CTO when the new FY City Pairs are available.

Note: For all flights, after departure, changes cannot be made in DTS. The return flight not booked in the original FY authorization cannot be added after departure in DTS. The TO should coordinate with the CTO to confirm that return flights, when booked will not be queued back to DTS. This is a normal procedure - offline reservations are not queued back to DTS.

If the travel arrangements on the authorization (with a departure prior to 30 September) are made after the new GSA City Pairs are available, normal FY Crossover selection and processing occurs.

CHAPTER 6: Advances and Scheduled Partial Payments (SPPs)

Note: Any documents that are approved during the accounting system shutdown period will be held by DTS, therefore any Advances that are requested will not be PAID until the accounting systems start processing again.

6.1 New Fiscal Year Trips

This section applies to new FY travel that needs to be created and routed for approval prior to the new FY availability of funds.

6.1.1 Advances for New Fiscal Year Trips

If the trip begins early in the new fiscal year (from 1 October until a few days after the end of the planned accounting system shutdown), non-ATM advances requested through DTS are not available. Approval for trips prior to the availability of funds and accounting system processing can be accomplished in DTS; however the financial transactions will be held by DTS until the accounting system is ready. The advance does not reach the traveler until three or more business days after the accounting system begins processing, this is assuming the disbursing system is also online. Organizations should ensure that travelers requiring an advance for departures occurring during this time frame become Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) holders to minimize the need for a non-ATM advance.

6.1.2 SPPs for New Fiscal Year Trips

If the trip begins early in the new fiscal year (i.e., 1 October until a few days after the end of the planned accounting system shutdown), there should be no affect on SPPs as the first SPP is scheduled to occur 30 days after the departure for trips longer than 45 days. Assuming the earliest departure date is 1 October, the accounting and disbursing systems will be available, the first SPP would reach the traveler by 30 October.

6.2 Crossover Fiscal Year Trips

This Section applies to those trips that begin in the current FY and continue into the new FY.

6.2.1 Advances for Crossover Fiscal Year Trips

Non-ATM advances requested through DTS are available until the accounting system shutdown prevents the POSITIVE ACKNOWLDEGMENT (POSACK) stamp and two-day disbursing cycle from completing prior to the shutdown. To be prudent, approvals for trips with advances should be completed at least five business days prior to the shutdown. If the authorization is approved, but processing is not completed, the payment will be delayed to the traveler.

With split advance invoices between the current fiscal year LOA and the new fiscal year LOA, the current fiscal year advance invoice will not be submitted until the current fiscal year obligation receives a POSACK stamp. For trips that start late in September, the first advance may not be sufficient to meet the traveler's needs for the first two or three weeks in October. The next fiscal advance invoice will not be submitted until the new fiscal year obligation receives a POSACK stamp, which will not occur until the accounting system is ready.

Organizations should ensure that travelers requiring an advance for departures during this time frame become GTCC holders to minimize the need for a non-ATM advance.

6.2.2 SPPs for Fiscal Year Crossover Trips

The situation and considerations for SPPs for fiscal year crossover trips depend on the start date and length of the trip. Generally, DTS will process all SPPs on schedule.

Depending on the approval date, the departure date, and shutdown schedule, some payments may be delayed. Consideration should be given in certain situations to using a combination of advance and SPPs to ensure the traveler has sufficient funds.

For trips that begin before 20 August, normal SPPs should process correctly with no effect on the traveler. After the POSACK stamp has been placed on the obligation, the first SPP would be due NLT than 20 September, before the end of year shutdown. The next payment would be due NLT 20 October. This will process on or after the scheduled date after the POSACK stamp is received and the invoice is processed in October.

Trips departing after 20 August to 20 September are prime candidates for a DTS Non-ATM advance request along with SPPs. If the traveler's situation allows an advance in accordance with the Financial Management Regulations (FMR), the advance will pre-pay 80% of the expenses incurred for up to the first 30 days. Then SPPs will be scheduled for the remainder of the trip. The DTA needs to ensure the traveler's profile is updated prior to creation of the authorization to reflect Advance Authorized.

Note: The traveler will not be overpaid when requesting an advance and SPP. The advance is calculated for up to the first 30 days and the last SPP is adjusted to ensure that the total of the advance and SPPs does not exceed the reimbursable expenses reflected in the authorization.

However, as the departure date approaches closer to 30 September, the amount of the advance is reduced as it is calculated on the reimbursable costs through 30 September. Travelers leaving later in September should be encouraged to obtain a GTCC, and the AO/DTA should closely monitor the shutdown process and, as soon as possible, have the current FY amendment approved and processed.

CHAPTER 7: Local Vouchers

Local vouchers cannot be processed with two fiscal year LOAs. Separate local vouchers must be processed.

Local vouchers in the current FY should be approved well before the accounting system shutdown to ensure processing is completed prior to the shutdown. If the accounting system processing cannot be completed prior to the shutdown, the traveler and AO must remember that the payment will not be processed until the obligation has received the POSACK stamp after the shutdown.

Local vouchers for the new fiscal year should not be approved until funds are available.

CHAPTER 8: No-Year and Multi-Year Funds

Some organizations use funding that allows obligation of travel expenses from multiple years to the same LOA. Based on service/agency and accounting system guidance, users who can cite the same LOA for the entire trip can create the initial authorization with beginning dates in the current FY and ending in the new FY without creating an amendment after 30 September.

The entire crossover trip can be entered without using the procedure outlined in Chapter 4. The companion document, *DTS Guide to Establishing LOAs and Budgets for the New Fiscal Year*, Section 2.6, includes a discussion of this topic. The FDTA/BDTA need to decide whether to continue using the current FY LOA labels in the new fiscal year or to rollover the labels (leaving the year related data element the same). This is a local decision.

CHAPTER 9: Document Fiscal Year for Navy LOA (STARS-FL and STARS-HCM) FY Crossover Trips Only

Only Navy LOAs processed in the STARS-FL and STARS-HCM accounting systems for fiscal year crossover trips must have the new FY LOA placed in the document. This is necessary so that the new FY expenses will have a Document FY (DFY) of the current FY. All LOAs on a trip have to have the same DFY based on the departure date. A pure current FY trip has current FY LOAs with a DFY/BFY/EFY of the current FY. A pure new FY trip has all LOAs with a DFY/BFY/EFY of the new FY. An FY crossover trip has a current FY LOA with a DFY of the current FY and a new FY LOA with a DFY of the current FY (and a BFY & EFY of the new FY).

The DTS Guide to Establishing LOAs and Budgets for the New Fiscal Year, Section 2.6, discusses the options for creating crossover LOAs with budget items. The FDTA/BDTA need to decide on the approach to be used.

CHAPTER 10: Changes to Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowances Committee (PDTATAC), TDY Locations (CONUS), and State Dept. Locations (OCONUS)

In conjunction with the change in the fiscal year, the governing bodies that set the per diem rates conduct a sometimes-extensive update to existing lodging, meals, and incidental rates. These changes are loaded into DTS when available. For trips created prior to the new rate upload, any changed rates are updated in the DTS document the next time an amendment or voucher is created. The only situation where the changes may not automatically be updated is if the voucher is created before the rate changes are loaded into DTS. If this is the case, removing and re-adding the affected per diem location will allow the new rate to be picked up.

Any issues with locations and per diem rates should be reported to the Travel Assistance Center (TAC) by submitting a help desk ticket through the Tickets section of Travel Explorer (TraX) or by phone at 1-888-HELP1GO (888-435-7146). The subject line of the ticket should start with "PER DIEM LOCATION RATE PROBLEM".